

Identifying a legal caribou

The caribou bag limit is restricted to one sex for at least a portion of the season in part or all of Units 9, 12, 13, 15, 16, and Units 18 through 26.



Bull

1. The best method to identify bulls is to determine the presence of a penis sheath. On young bulls (one to three years old) the sex organs are less apparent. The white rump patch is narrower on bulls than cows.

2. Antlers are well developed (3+ feet) in mature bulls. Young bulls typically have smaller antlers with relatively small brow tine/shovel development, and often can not be distinguished from a cow using antler development alone.

Caribou Hunters:

Know Your Targets

Cows and young bulls may look alike when their tails are down.



Cow

1. The vaginal opening (the lower and larger of two dark oval areas) is apparent when viewed carefully from the rear. The white rump patch is wider on cows than bulls.

2. The antlers of cows are smaller than those of most bulls, with the exception of many yearling bulls and a small percentage of 2-year-old bulls.

Most cow caribou have antlers from June through April of the following year. Bull caribou have antlers from May through part of the winter. The oldest bulls drop antlers first, sometimes as early as November, while young bulls (yearlings and 2-year-olds) may not drop their antlers until April.

Special meat salvage requirements:

Edible meat must be salvaged. In addition, caribou taken before October 1 in Unit 9B, Unit 17, Unit 18, those portions of Unit 19A within the Holitna/Hoholintna Controlled Use Area, Unit 19B, and Unit 21A the edible meat of the front quarters and hindquarters must remain naturally attached to the bone until the meat has been transported from the field or is processed for human consumption, and in Unit 23 and Unit 24 the edible meat of the ribs also must remain naturally attached to the bone. (See *Salvage*, page 18.)

Identifying a legal (mature) muskoxen

Adult Cow

- horn bases are small, partially hidden by light-colored hair
- little or no horn visible above the eyes
- small horn diameter
- only the 'hooks' of the horn are easily seen
- body size is 10 to 30% smaller than a bull



Adult Bull

- large prominent 'boss' covering the forehead
- little or no hair between horn bases
- overall, horns are much more massive than a cow
- horns may be broomed or broken
- old bulls often solitary or found in pairs

Caution: Black horn tips are common on bulls, but may also be present on cows. Under some light conditions, the white hair on a cow forehead can be mistaken for a 'boss' on a bull. For tips on hunting muskox, visit <http://www.wc.adfg.state.ak.us/index.cfm?adfg=hunting.muskox>